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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/CEN (M. O'MARA), SCA/A (N. SINGH)

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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN TO SEND SURVEY TEAM TO AFGHANISTAN

REF: Almaty 3272

¶1. (SBU) Summary: A high-level Kazakhstani survey team will visit Afghanistan the week of September 24 in order to examine participation in a Provincial Reconstruction Team and possible investment/reconstruction projects. The team will provide its recommendations to President Nazarbayev soon after its return, i.e. on the eve of his meeting with President Bush. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) In a September 18 meeting, Deputy Foreign Minister Kairat Abdrakhmanov informed the Ambassador that he had been named to lead a 10-12 person delegation to Afghanistan beginning September 24. The interagency survey team will spend four-five days examining the question of participation in a Provincial Reconstruction Team and possible investment/reconstruction projects.

¶3. (SBU) The team will fly to Kabul by commercial air. The Kazakhstani Embassy in Afghanistan has recommended that they conduct meetings in Kabul with the Afghan government and visit three northern provinces: Balch, Kunduz, and Jowzjan.

¶4. (SBU) The delegation list is still being finalized, according to Abdrakhmanov. Participants will include representatives of the MFA, MOD, Vice Minister of Industry and Trade Smagulov (co-chair of the intergovernmental commission on cooperation with Afghanistan), the head of the Industry and Trade committee on military sales, a representative of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources' (MEMR) department of electricity and coal, a representative of MEMR's geology committee, a representative of the Investment Fund, representatives of the state wheat and livestock companies, and Saidmurat Tanirbergen from the Security Council (reftel).

¶5. (SBU) The Ambassador told Abdrakhmanov that post would work with Embassy Kabul and CENTCOM to support the survey team, as discussed during General Eikenberry's recent visit. DATT provided relevant contact information, noting that PRTs in the regions the team plans to visit are under the ISAF mandate.

¶6. (SBU) Comment: President Nazarbayev's upcoming meeting with President Bush is clearly driving the schedule for the survey team. Kazakhstan is sending a high-level delegation so that they can present an authoritative recommendation to Nazarbayev on the eve of his White House meetings. Support from CFC-A and Embassy Kabul will be essential to ensure that this team sees the right locations and people to get an

accurate picture of the functioning of a PRT, particularly the security aspects. End comment.

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